

DESIGNING THE NEXT GENERATION OF
**SCHOOLS OF NURSING
& ALLIED HEALTH**



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UNIQUE CHALLENGES

The field of nursing continues to experience tremendous growth and offer robust job prospects to new graduates. Changes in the healthcare industry, the field of nursing, new pedagogies and the business of post-secondary education have presented nursing school administrators with a new set of challenges.

For four decades, the team at Hord Coplan Macht (HCM) has provided expert design services to healthcare and educational institutions across the country to help them meet current needs while offering flexibility for the future.

Recognizing the unique set of challenges nursing/allied health educators and administrators are currently facing, we are creating resources to offer insight into the evolving nursing profession, how educators are addressing this evolution and the pallet of learning spaces needed to prepare nursing students for the future profession.

Evolving Healthcare Environment

Numerous forces continue to change the landscape of the healthcare industry. The aging American population could be the single greatest force impacting healthcare today. This 'Silver Tsunami' of older patients stresses healthcare systems in many ways and has placed an acute focus on the need for more specialized geriatric and public health services.

Hospitals are becoming places where only the very sick will be treated—essentially ICU's of the past. Urgent care centers located in communities and commercial spaces are key conduits of care for many patients. Doctors' offices and outpatient surgery centers see more patients and utilize more sophisticated technology. Public Health professionals, including nurses, are also caring for patients within the patients' homes. In the case of Catholic University of America's School of Nursing, they are reaching into the community through public school systems to offer care.

In addition, the current climate and the creation of the American Health Care Act and healthcare reform will transform the way institutions are compensated, and will continue to make budgeting and planning for future growth a challenge. Healthcare reform has placed an emphasis



on metrics, which are increasingly available to the public. Readmission rates, infection rates, secondary surgical procedures and others are all factors.

Technology is advancing rapidly and constantly changing, requiring practitioners to understand the correct application of the technology and the meaning of the data output.

The delivery of healthcare has transitioned from a linear model to a more collaborative approach with a team of providers working together to serve the best needs of the patient. The silos between nurses, physicians and allied health providers are breaking down and future nurses will increasingly collaborate with a variety of healthcare professionals. Communication and teamwork are essential for the future nurse.

A smaller percentage of nurses are working in a hospital setting. They need to be acclimated to and perform in different working environments and communicate well with patients and their families, as well as with all types of medical professionals. Possessing tremendous technical skills are equally important as nurses' critical thinking and assessment skills.

Changing Demographics in Nursing

The U.S. Census Bureau projects the majority of Americans under 18 will be non-white by the year 2018 (Frey, 2012). As our population becomes more diverse, healthcare providers seek to reflect that diversity in their nursing staff. Nursing schools have seen a gradual shift in the demographics of their students and faculties, but challenges still exist in meeting inclusion goals. More minorities, men and international students are entering the nursing field.

Overall, the field continues to experience strong growth. A 2014 report from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) pointed to a surge in enrollment in Schools of Nursing, with a 4.2% increase in entry-level BSN programs, a 10.4% growth in RN to BSN enrollment, and a 6.6% increase in master's degree programs. One of the greatest challenges for schools of nursing is a major shortage of nursing educators. In general, the demographic of nursing educators is heavily weighted toward older nurses that are approaching retirement. Many schools of nursing have multiple unfilled faculty positions.

Active Learning Spaces Enhance Outcomes

Numerous studies have documented how active learning classroom settings contribute to enhanced learning outcomes for students. The National Training Laboratory found that, while only 5% of the information in a lecture is retained on average by students, when students teach each other, 80% of the information is retained.

A recent study completed by Hord Coplan Macht and Morgan State University, published by the American Institute of Architects documents the contribution of the learning environment to enhanced outcomes underscores the importance of offering active learning classrooms to a diverse population. The study, which compared the traditional classroom with one that offered round tables for small group discussion, white boards and collaborative technology created an atmosphere in which the professor served as a co-learner rather than a lecturer; and strongly suggests an active, engaged, peer-to-peer learning setting is vital to mitigate the unique inhibitions of diverse students in a traditional lecture classroom.



5 KEY TRENDS AFFECTING NURSING EDUCATION + FACILITY DESIGN

We believe these key trends will profoundly impact the delivery of nursing education and the design of nursing school facilities going forward.

1 Nursing Faculty Shortage

In addition to practicing nurses, there is an acute shortage of qualified nursing faculty. This has caused some nursing schools—such as Johns Hopkins University (JHU)—to shift their programs away from undergraduate nursing to graduate education to educate the next generation of faculty. This requires schools of nursing to recalibrate their classrooms and learning spaces to fit the new pedagogy associated with graduate education.

2 Collaborative Learning

As healthcare reimbursement shifts from fee-for-service to more outcome-based the silos between nursing and other health disciplines are beginning to come down to promote greater collaboration between disciplines. Nursing education programs plan for more collaborative educational approaches with physicians and other allied health colleagues.

3 Distance Learning & Online Education

Nursing education is increasingly moving online, offering greater flexibility for those non-traditional students who are raising families, working full time, living in rural areas, or have other reasons to choose a less traditional route to their training. Many of the country's top graduate nursing schools, including Johns Hopkins University, Duke and George Washington, offer highly rated online programs.

4 Experiential, High-Tech & Interactive Learning

The advances in simulation technology and the explosion in high tech/ experiential/interactive approaches to learning represent one of the most important trends in undergraduate nursing education today. Simulation labs are becoming more specialized, offering specific experience in the OR, ER, ICU, pediatric, geriatric, maternity, isolation room settings and public health settings such as an apartment or a residential environment. In addition, it is getting more difficult for nurses to gain clinical experience. Nursing schools—such as Catholic University—are forming partnerships within communities to deliver healthcare and provide venues for their student to gain this experience.

5 Nurse Practitioner & Post Degree Programs

Due to the shortage of nurses and ample employment opportunities, many college graduates, nursing or others, are pursuing a nursing degree as a second profession. This includes students pursuing a degree in nurse practitioner or accelerated second degree BSN programs.





IMPLICATIONS OF THESE TRENDS FOR NURSING EDUCATION FACILITIES

Assessing Existing Space / Defining Future Needs

Not all nursing schools have the luxury of constructing an entirely new facility from the ground up. For many schools, evaluating how they use existing space is an ongoing process, especially in light of increased enrollment. Any nursing school can benefit from performing a space audit of their facility. Carefully analyzing the culture of the school, program of studies, pedagogy and the physical space requirements can yield dramatic improvements to learning outcomes.

Technology Dictates Design

Many nursing schools are comprised of lecture halls, computer labs and basic skills labs. There exists a great opportunity for these schools to retool their physical space to allow the continued growth of technology, online delivery of education and improved workplace readiness. Students now collaborate in many ways: virtually, in-between classes, spontaneously, and in a scheduled session on team assignments whereas just a few years ago interaction was mainly in-person. As a result, nursing schools need to provide student centric space that allows a variety of informal learning and study spaces. These spaces offer flexibility for the size of the working group, for technology, the type of space, the level of acoustic privacy and the formality of the space.





DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS + SOLUTIONS

The final layout and design of specific spaces in nursing schools depends on a number of factors that are examined during the initial stages of a project. The number and type of students served, the types of degrees offered (BN, NP, Graduate, PHD), partnerships with hospitals and health systems, the demographic make-up of the student population, budget and available land or building space are all key considerations that enter into the equation.

The nursing schools of today and tomorrow will require more diverse learning spaces to adapt to the evolution of nursing education. We have developed a breakdown of the specific spaces and design considerations for a nursing school facility that will meet student needs for decades to come.

As nursing education evolves and schools of nursing change their degree offerings, the size and type of classroom environments are not often aligned with the new pedagogical method. This, coupled with the need to provide active learning environments, puts many schools in a situation where they do not have adequate and right sized learning space. We continue to see the following trends in learning environments.

CLASSROOMS 2.0

Active learning classrooms with flexible furniture, raised floors, multiple writing surfaces (walls and movable white boards) and ample interactive technology are augmenting the lecture style classrooms. Large flat floor rooms, which can be divided into medium sized classrooms, are replacing these inflexible rooms in many institutions. Many classrooms are also being designed with future flexibility in mind to be used for a lab or simulation space where hospital beds could be moved in and out without altering the size of the doors.

INFORMAL LEARNING SPACES

All types of educational institutions, including nursing schools, are seeing increased student-to-student and instructor-to-student interaction when they provide informal learning spaces throughout the campus.

EVENT SPACES

As the healthcare debate continues, many nursing schools are actively participating in the dialogue and are finding the need for event spaces. At the 2016 AACN Spring Conference, HCM live polling indicated that this was one of the biggest facility needs in their schools. These spaces can be designed in a way that provide classroom space, student study and collaboration areas, and

development events. These spaces also provide a venue for nursing schools to share knowledge.

CLINIC SPACES

Rotations in hospitals and health centers provide students with opportunities to interact with real patients to develop vital interpersonal skills. Today, some schools are considering the development of nurse practitioner clinics in their and other community facilities to allow for more clinic time, especially at schools that are not located near hospitals. This helps the students learn and can also improve the healthcare options available to the surrounding community.

AV / MEDIA PRODUCTION SPACES

Creative spaces will continue to grow in importance for nursing schools. Teachers need basic studio space to create content as part of online coursework and students need to create and edit video for group projects and term papers. Dedicated IT and digital app development space is also worth considering as both teaching and healthcare delivery becomes more online based and mobile.

REJUVENATING SPACES

Nursing students face tremendous stress and tragedy fairly early on in their training. New nurses need to be trained to take care of themselves as well as others so they can maintain a good mental outlook and continue to optimally care for patients. Cafés offering healthy food and beverage options can offer a place to unwind and refuel for nursing students that "live" at the school from Monday to Friday. Warm inviting spaces allow for introspection or connection with others. Thoughtful designs and color schemes all come into play.

Acknowledgments

Through the design of nursing schools at University of Virginia, Harford Community College, Gordon State College, Georgetown University, Washington Adventist University and Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, HCM staff have identified current trends in the healthcare marketplace and in nursing education that will impact the design of learning space for nursing education.

In addition to drawing upon our team's breadth and depth of knowledge, we reached out to clients and leaders in nursing education across the country to learn more about the trends they see. They shared their best practices for helping students prepare themselves to succeed in the field of nursing, offered a glimpse into how the needs of students will continue to change and what challenges nursing schools will face in the coming years.

HCM thanks the following nursing education leaders that spoke with us and shared their expertise:

Dr. Dorrie Fontaine, RN, PhD, FAAN
Dean of the School of Nursing, University of Virginia

Dr. Patricia Davidson, PhD, Med, RN
Dean, Johns Hopkins School of Nursing

Dr. Patricia McMullen, PhD, JD, CRNP
Dean & Ordinary Professor, Catholic University of America

Dr. Patricia Morton, RN, PhD, FAAN
Dean of the School of Nursing, University of Utah

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